PDS in tribal, hilly and remote areas

2620. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of measures being taken by Government for strengthening Public Distribution System in the country particularly in tribal, hilly and remote areas; and

(b) the role being played by the State Government to provide the quantity of foodgrains to the poor people in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA) : (a) and (b) The Public Distribution System is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and State Governments. The Central Government is responsible for the procurement and transportation of foodgrains upto the principal distribution centres of the Food Corporation of India while the State Governments are responsible for the identification of families living Below the Poverty Line, the issue of the Ration Cards and the distribution of foodgrains to the consumers through Fair Price Shops (FPS). Following measures have been taken by the Government for strengthening the Public Distribution System in the country including the rural, remote, hilly and tribal areas:—

(i) The Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 has been issued on 31st August, 2001 under Section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 with a view to curb wilful adulteration, substitution, diversion, theft of stocks from the Central godowns to Fair Price Shops and at the premises of the FPS etc.

(ii) A Task Force has been constituted to look into the irregularities in the implementation of the TPDS and Antyodaya Anna Yojana in the identified areas.

(iii) States/UTs have been asked to actively involve the Gram Panchayats in rural areas and local bodies in urban areas in the monitoring of Fair Price Shop as a measure of social audit.

(iv) A model Citizen's Charter has been issued to all the States/UTs for adoption.